

The pupae are found in the ants' nest attached by their cremal hooks on the floor of the tunnels. The pupae found so far have always been in side tunnels, away from the main brood chamber. This stage lasts some twenty days.

(to be concluded)

Notes and Observations

UNUSUAL EGGLAYING IN THE PEACOCK BUTTERFLY — In an interesting article, (*Ent Rec.* 98: 9-10), A. S. Pullin draws attention to the occasional habit of female small tortoiseshell butterflies of depositing their eggs on top of previously laid batches. In May 1986, I caged three female peacocks in a large bucket cage containing fresh, bushy young nettles. After one week, a typical large egg batch was laid. Within 24 hours, a fresh batch had been deposited on the basal aspect of the first batch. The second batch was normal in all respects, save its proximity to the first batch. I have never observed this behaviour before, either in the peacock or small tortoiseshell butterflies. W. E. RIMINGTON, 8 Riverside Drive, Sprotborough, Doncaster.

SOME LATE SIGHTINGS OF BUTTERFLIES AND OTHER INSECTS IN AND AROUND HAMPSHIRE DURING THE MILD AUTUMN OF 1986. — Although there were some cold nights during the first half of September, the autumn was generally most mild and it was not until the end of the first week of December that the first effective frost occurred in Hampshire; moreover, day temperatures remained unusually high and something approximating to a drought prevailed until the autumn rains arrived, in earnest, on 20th October. As a consequence, many insects lingered deep into the autumn and a greatly extended season resulted.

In terms of butterflies it appears that we had the most drawn out season since the remarkable 1975, when *Lasiommata megera*, *Pararge aegeria* and *Pieris rapae* lasted into November. In central southern England it is unusual for *Pyronia tithonus* to be seen after the first few days of September. For many years my own latest sighting was of a lone female on 11th September (1971); this 'record' was superseded on 13th September 1985 and I then considered my 1986 sighting of a very worn female on 18th September to constitute a personal nonpariel, and took pride in the fact that the butterfly was seen in my garden. Pride comes before a fall, for one was seen no later than 3rd October at Hambledon Hill, Dorset!

Hipparchia semele was seen on the Chalk near Wallingford, Berks, on 4th October and on the 8th on a dry heath near Farnborough, Hants. Although I have, in years long gone, seen this

species in fair numbers during early October at Tentsmuir Point, Fife, it is most unusual for it to be seen in the deep south after, say, 20th September. Apart from in poor autumns, such as that of 1983, *Maniola jurtina* tends to last just into October on chalk grassland in Hampshire; whether this is due to a protracted emergence or a partial second generation I know not. In 1986 the last specimen, predictably female, was seen at Selborne on 26th October. *Coenonympha pamphilus* often straddles into early October here: I saw my last of the year on the 16th but the Warden of Old Winchester Hill NNR recorded one on 2nd November, surely an excessively late date for this species? Normally, in east Hampshire the last *Pararge aegeria* of the year is noted during mid October and it is rare to see the species after, say, the 15th. In 1986 I saw my first November specimens for 11 years, the last being seen on the 6th. In 1975 one was seen near Alton on Armistice Day.

Second generation specimens of *Cupido minimus* were seen as late as 20th September near West Meon and other Lycaenid butterflies were prominent on the Chalk during the mild weather of the first half of October. *Polyommatus icarus*, *Lysandra bellargus* and *L. coridon* were on the wing well into the month, the latter being seen as late as 17th October near Winchester. The third generation of *Lycaena phlaeas* was decidedly scarce in Hampshire and no genuinely late sightings have been reported. However, I did see a very worn *Thecla betulae* near Selborne on 16th October: I have monitored this isolated colony closely since 1975 and had previously not seen the adult later than 7th October and consequently regard this 1986 sighting as being of some significance. *Hesperia comma* occurs at three or four sites in the Meon valley region of Hampshire, where its flight season seemingly takes place later than elsewhere in central southern England, peak season normally occurring during the first few days of September. I was rather amazed to find it well out on 21st September but am reliably informed that it lasted well into October, the final record coming from the 11th. Gradually one becomes immune to surprise. Perhaps my sighting of a single specimen of the moth *Autographa gamma* on 15th November would not have been too noteworthy had it taken place in Cornwall or on the Isle of Wight. It is the latest record I have for it in this part of the country by a long way.

Dragonflies also enjoyed an extended season. *Aeshna cyanea* has the reputation for being the last species to be seen during the year and has been recorded quite well into November; for example, I saw one near Alton on 8th November 1978. This year it also made it into November, one being seen on the 2nd which is a reasonably late record. The robberfly *Laphria marginata* is considered to be a distinctly local high summer insect which is perhaps least scarce in and around Hampshire woodlands. On 10th October I caught what I

at first took to be a late *Dioctria* at Selborne, only on closer inspection for it to turn out to be a female *L. marginata* so worn that the distinctive golden hairs had all rubbed away. The sighting of the common calcareous grassland species *Machimus atricapillus* on 26th October may also constitute a rather late record. The hoverfly *Ferdinandea cuprea* is locally common in woodland in my part of the country, occurring from middish April through to early autumn. My sighting of a female on 29th October 1986 may be of interest as a late record, perhaps also a sighting of the common species *Helophilus pendulus* on 6th November.

Bush crickets and grasshoppers are particularly prone to longevity during mild autumns and in 1986 the calcareous grassland grasshopper *Stenobothrus lineatus* was still prominent at Selborne on 7th October. In this part of England *Pholidoptera griseoptera* can sometimes be heard stridulating during the first few days of November. However, prior to 1986 I had not heard it later than the 10th, this year I heard a lone male on the 15th. Also still active that same day was the local grasshopper *Gomphocerippus rufus*, of which a small colony exists at Selborne. I am convinced that I have found this species at the beginning of December, perhaps in 1978, but the record and the memory seem to have sunk Lethe-wards. MATTHEW OATES, The Lodge, Wyck Place, Wyck, Alton, Hampshire GU34 3AH.

BUTTERFLY RECORDS FROM THE ISLE OF WIGHT, 1985 – My wife and I spent the period 26.v. to 2.vi.1985 on the Isle of Wight, during which time we recorded 24 species of butterfly. As this total is so large for only one week and several interesting species are represented thought it was worth recording them formally.

Erynnis tages L., *Pyrgus malvae* L., *Gonepteryx rhamni* L., *Pieris brassicae* L., *P. rapae* L., *P. napi* L., *Anthocharis cardamines* L., *Callophrys rubi* L., *Lycaena phlaeas* L., *Cupido minimus* Guess., *Aricia agestis* D. & S., *Polyommatus icarus* Rolt., *Lysandra bellargus* Rott., *Celastrina argiolus* Ver., *Vanessa atalanta* L., *Cynthia cardui* L., *Aglais urticae* L., *Inachis io* L., *Polygonia c-album* L., *Boloria euphrosyne* L., *Melitaea cinxia* L., *Pararge aegeria* L., *Lasiommata megera* L., *Coenonympha pamphilus* L.

Of these several are worth mentioning in more detail: A specimen of *P. malvae* var. *taras* Berq. turned up at Brightstone Forest (E) where the type was quite common on the wider, flowery woodland rides and clearings. I was surprised at how localised *G. rhamni* seemed to be. We only saw this species at Firestone Copse, near Havenstreet, where it was the commonest butterfly on the wing.